

CLEVELAND and TEESSIDE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 December 2019

The passage of time does not stop.

Following the dramatic events of the last ten months – in which a pandemic has changed lives dramatically – one may be forgiven for wondering if 2019 ever happened.

But it is one of the roles of a historian to record the past, so here goes.

After the excitement of the previous year, when the Cleveland and Teesside Local History Society celebrated its Golden Jubilee, it was almost inevitable that 2019 would seem quieter. Yet in truth the Society still delivered a lot of activities, and more importantly continued to develop so as to be responsive to the changing needs of its members.

The Golden Jubilee Year saw us hold a Golden Jubilee Celebration Meal, a Golden Jubilee Day School, hold a special Packett Prize Competition, publish three special editions of the Society's bulletin, and begin the process of selecting and publicising fifty People, Events, Buildings, and Places of significance in the history of the area (all in addition to our usual activities) The excitement of the Golden Jubilee Year saw an increase in membership. And the year was rounded off by the CTLHS Newsletter being named 'Newsletter of the Year' by the British Association for Local History.

However, as we historians know, time stops for no one.

In 2019 we therefore continued to deliver a varied and interesting programme of talks, to publish newsletters and bulletins, and to develop our social media.

As at 31 December 2019 we had 260 paid-up members including 22 institutional members (by way of comparison, on 31 December 2018 there had been 272 Members, including 23 institutions and on 31 December 2017 there were 257 Members, including 24 institutions).

In the twelve months to 31 December 2019, we delivered five Saturday meetings, with ten speakers, supported the annual Elgee Memorial Lecture hosted this year by TAS ('Durham and Dunbar: Scottish Soldiers at Palace Green' – Richard Annis) and provided, in conjunction with Teesside University, a Day School.

The Society programme this year comprised:

- 'Skinningrove: It's Social Development due to Ironstone Mining and the Iron Industry' - Colin Hart
- 'Forensic Archaeology' - David Dance
- 'A Story: Dark Deeds, Deception and Discovery at Meynell Hall in the 17th Century' - Geoffrey Taylor
- 'Home Comforts. The Role of the Red Cross Auxiliary Hospitals in the North Riding 1914-1919' - Eileen Brereton and Anne Wall
- Mulgrave: The Communities from Aislaby to Staithes near Whitby' - Christiane Kroebel
- 'The Refurbishment of Middlesbrough Town Hall' - Neil Cooke
- 'Discovering Paradise: Researching the History of Eryholme' – Professor Tony Pollard

- 'Munitions, Mergers and Military Imperatives: From World War I to ICI' - Dr Michael Sutton

The Twenty-Second Joint Day School, held on Saturday 16 March 2019 at Teesside University, addressed "Enterprise and Initiative in Nineteenth Century Cleveland", with papers being presented by Tony Nicholson, Gill Moore, Caroline Hardie, Malcolm Chase, David Taylor, and Martin Peagam.

There were also two guided walks: on 15 May 2019 a guided tour of Linthorpe Cemetery with Ian Stubbs took place to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the opening of the cemetery and on 12 June 2019 a guided tour of the refurbished Middlesbrough Town Hall took place.

The activities of the Society are coordinated by the Members of the Management Committee, ably steered by our Chairman, Geoff Braddy. The last year has seen some significant changes in the membership of the Committee.

At the 2019 AGM, Allan Wilby retired from the role of Programme Secretary, a role he had occupied for an amazing 37 years, and Margaret Wilby retired as Treasurer. Allan and Margaret were co-opted to the Committee to provide the benefit of their experience. Their places as Programme Secretary and Treasurer respectively were taken by Matt Falcus and Julie Tweedy, who bring new, fresh ideas to their roles.

Like Allan and Margaret, Lee Firth, has served the Society for a long time. She has now been Membership Secretary for nineteen years, and she continues to bring to that role a diligent but friendly approach which is appreciated by all Members.

Last year we reported another retirement, that of Dorothy Thomson, who ensured that postal communications, including the Bulletin and Newsletter, were put together and despatched to Members. Following Dorothy's retirement, Stephanie Green took over this very important task.

Val Harrison continues to edit and publish the Society bulletin 'Cleveland History' and we know that the publication, and the work behind it, are greatly appreciated by Members.

The Newsletter continues to be collated and edited by Jenny Braddy, our Newsletter Editor, and is well-received by Members.

The internet is an important communication tool that was not available fifty years ago: Martin Peagam and Matt Falcus continue to lead the Society's Social Media Strategy. They have developed the web site to have a Members Only area, they maintain our Facebook page, and they publish and distribute a monthly digital bulletin 'The Scroll'.

In addition to all those mentioned above, the Society has benefitted from the enthusiasm, expertise and ideas of other Committee Members – Ian Stubbs, Alison Brown, Paul Stephenson, Stewart Ramsdale, and Francine Marshall - steered and guided by our Chairman, Geoff Braddy, and Vice-Chairman, Linda Polley.

The first year after our Golden Jubilee was a busy one, and suggested that the Society is continuing to serve a need and to continually seek new ways of informing, educating and entertaining people about the local history of Cleveland and Teesside.

Little did we know at 31 December 2019 what the new year would bring.